Translation Theory in the 20th century

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1.Philosophical Theories of Translation:

- Ezra Pound
- Walter Benjamin

2. The Linguistic Era:

- Roman Jakobson
- Eugene Nida
- J. C. Catford

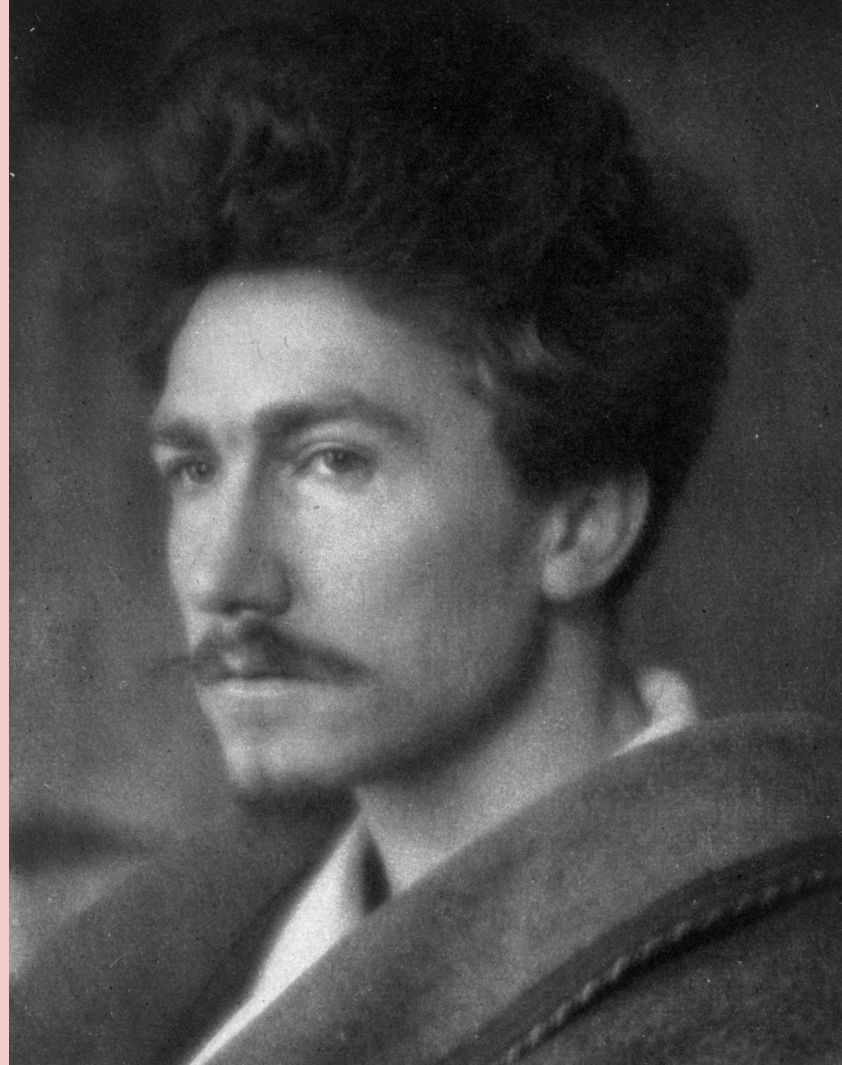# Contents (still)

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3. Functionalism:

- "Cultural Turn"
- Descriptive Translation Studies

4. Postcolonialism:

- Lawrence Venuti

Ezra Pound (1885-1972)

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- Imagism>Vorticism (words=images)
- tried to reproduce text not only lexically but also phonetically
- saw a translation as the creation of an original work (modernist approach)

Theory of "Vortex"

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General idea: <u>each language has energy, you should reproduce it in the OT.</u> **Vorticism**: an abstraction which frees the poet from a direct imitation of nature, yet results in an intellectually and emotionally charged form.

3 ways in which language is charged with energy:

1. *Melopoeia* – a musical property, melody of speech;
2. *Phanopoeia* – a visual property, images;
3. *Logopoeia* – the context we expect to find in the word.

NB! <u>We can not reproduce all the aspects of the OT.</u>

Walter Benjamin (1892 - 1940)
Article "The task of the translator"

- A translation does not only carry the message but also the value given to it throughout ages
- foreignization
- translation prolongs the life of the original and does not replace it
- meaning is complementary in intention. What you have to render is the intended effect, we deduce the intention from the text
- a real translation does not cover the original, a good translation reveals inherent hidden reciprocal relations between languages

"Real translation is transparent, it does not hide the original, it does not steal its light, but allows the pure language, as if reinforced through its own medium, to fall on the original work with greater fullness. This lies above all in the power of literalness in the translation of syntax, and even this points to the word, not the sentence, as the translator's original element"

Benjamin, in Lefevere 1977:102

Roman Jacobson "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" (1959)

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1. Intralingual translation or rewording is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language.

2. Interlingual translation or translation proper is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.

3. Intersemiotic translation or transmutation is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems

Equivalence in meaning

- a language – is a system of signs. Two languages are two different systems of signs
- there is no full equivalence between code-units since no two languages are the same
- the translator decodes the message from the original and transmits it into another language
- the translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes
- Only poetry (where form expresses sense) is untranslatable and requires "creative transposition"

Differences occur at:

- The *level of gender*: e.g. *house* is feminine in Romance languages, neuter in German and English; *honey* is masculine in French, German and Italian, feminine in Spanich, neuter in English, etc.;
- The *level of aspect*: in Russian, the verb morphology varies according to whether the action has been completed;
- The level of *semantic fields*: e.g. the German *Geschwester* is normally explicated in English as *brothers and sisters*, in English we have '*children*' and in Spanish we have '*hijas*' and '*hijos*'

Eugene Nida "Toward a Science of Translating" (1964)

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Functional Equivalence

formal equivalence

focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content

dynamic equivalence

relationship between receiver and message should aim at being the same as that between the original receivers and the SL message.

4 basic requirements a translation has to meet:
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- making sense
- conveying the spirit and manner of the original
- having a natural and easy form of expression
- producing a similar response

3 basic factors of differences in translation:
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- ❏ *the nature of the message*
- ❏ *the purpose(s) of the author and the translator*
- ❏ *the type of audience*

Nida's model of the translation process

In the case of translating HELLO

into German:

SL hello → friendly greeting on
arrival → transfer → decision to
distinguish between forms of
greeting available → TL wie
gehts?

SOURCE LANGUAGE TEXT

ANALYSIS

TRANSFER

RECEPTORLANGUAGE TRANSLATION

RESTRUCTURING
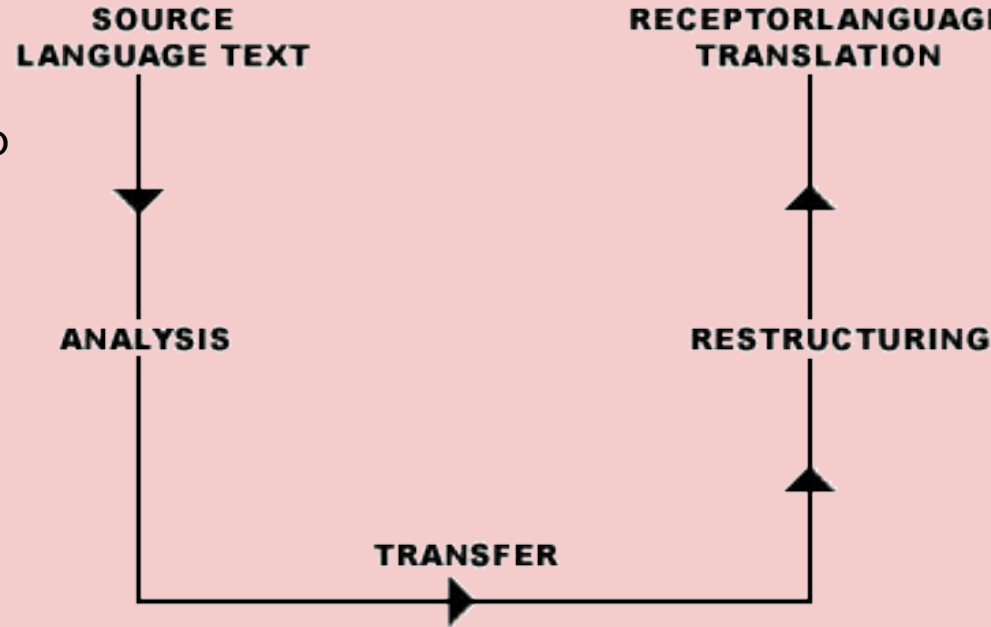
J. C. Catford "A Linguistic Theory of Translation" (1996)

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Criteria for translation according to its grammatical rank:

1. *Rank-bound translation*: each word or morpheme in the ST receives an equivalent TT word or morpheme, enabling precise exchange.

2. *Unbounded translation*: equivalence does not take place at the same level or rank but exchange can take place at the sentence, clause or other level.

Catford's equivalence

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- **formal correspondence** – "any TL category (unit, class, structure) which can be said to occupy as nearly as possible the same place in the economy of the TL as the SL [source language] given category occupied in the SL"

- **textual equivalence** – "any target language text or portion of text which is observed on a particular occasion to be equivalent of a given SL text or portion of text"

Shifts in translation

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1) **Level shifts** – are expressed by grammar in one language and lexis in another
2) **Category shifts:**
- structural shifts (involve shifts in grammatical structure)
- class shifts (comprise shifts from one part of speech to another)
- unit shifts/rank shifts (where translation equivalent in TL is at a different hierarchical linguistic unit of sentence)
- intra-system shifts (taking place when the SL and TL possess approximately corresponding systems but where the translation involves selection of a non-corresponding term in the TL system)

Leipzig school: Otto Kade

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"Accidents and Typical Cases in Translation"

On the unit or word level he proposes 4 types of correspondence:

1) One-to-one equivalence

2)One-to-many equivalence

3) One-to-a part of one equivalence

4)Zero-equivalence

Leipzig school: Albrecht Neubert

"Text and Translation"

Syntactic equivalence (relation between signs themselves)

Semantic equivalence (the relationship between signs and what they stand for)

Pragmatic equivalence (the relationship between signs, what they stand for and those who use them)

Warner Koller

1. **Denotative equivalence** is related to equivalence of the extralinguistic content of a text. Other literature calls this content invariance: *стіл – table, вікно – window, рушник – towel*.

2. **Connotative equivalence** is related to the lexical choices, especially between near-synonyms. This corresponds to "stylistic equivalence": *калина – cranberry; commence, begin − починати*.

3. **Text-normative equivalence** is related to text types, with different kinds of texts behaving in different ways: *I'm 18. I'm 18 years old.*

4. **Pragmatic equivalence** or communicative equivalence is oriented towards the receiver of the text or message. *anorak – куртка*.

5. **Formal equivalence**, which is related to the form and aesthetics of the text, includes word plays and the individual stylistic features of the ST.. *Seven days without water make one weak. (=1 week)*
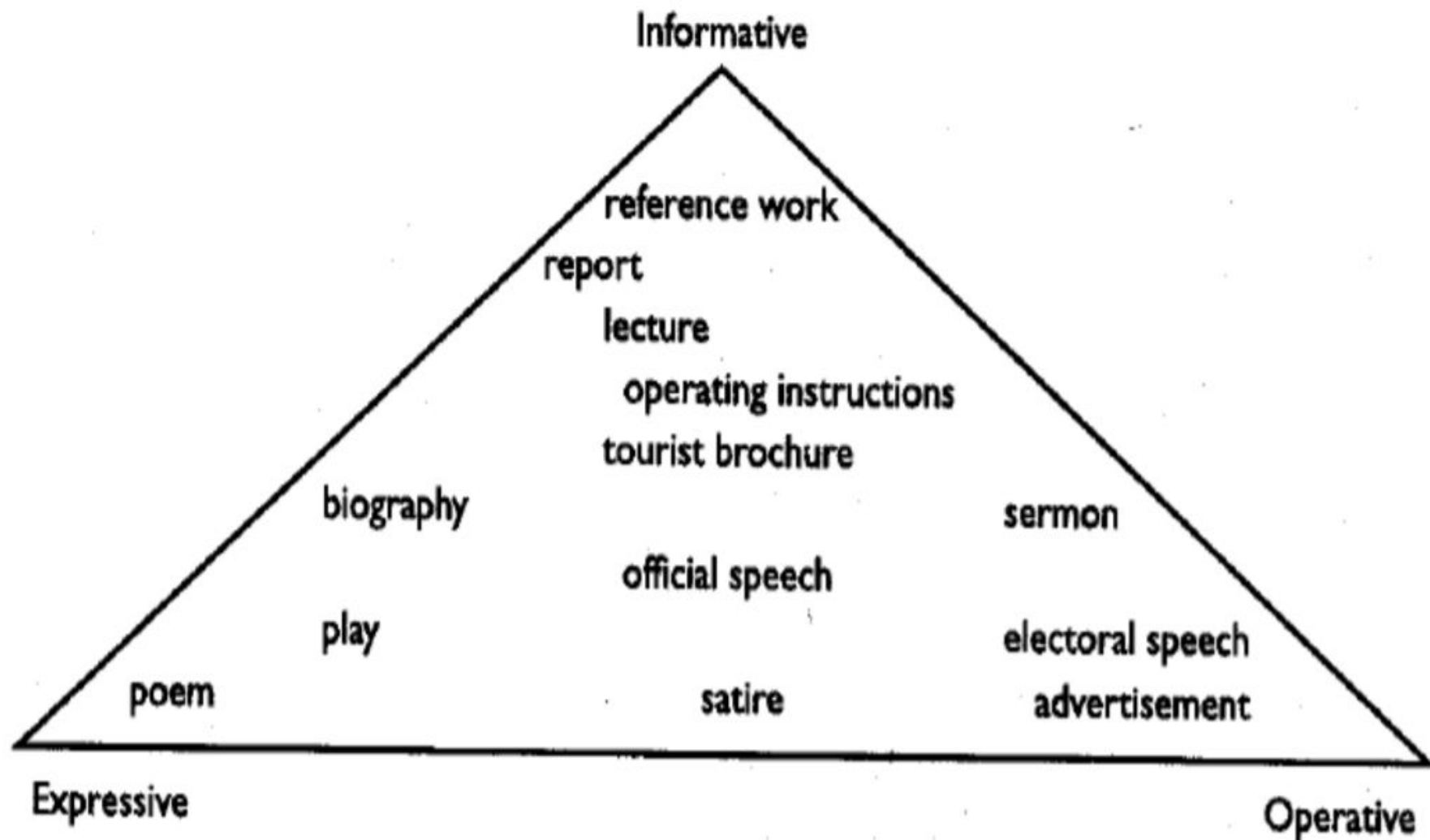
Katharina Reiss

She proposed the predominant functions of texts to be underlined content-focused (e.g. news items), form-focused (e.g. literary genres), and appeal-focused texts (e.g. advertisements).

The aim of translation is to preserve text types.

Text types and translation

Text type	Informative	Expressive	Operative
Language function	Representing facts	Expressing attitude	Making an appeal
Language dimension	Logical	Aesthetic	Dialogical
Text focus	Content-focused	Form-focused	Appeal-focused
TT should	Transfer content	Transfer aesthetic form	Elicit desired response
Translation method	Plain prose, clarification	Adopt ST perspective	Equivalent effect

Informative

reference work

report

lecture

operating instructions

tourist brochure

biography

sermon

official speech

play

electoral speech

poem

satire

advertisement

Expressive

Operative

Skopos theory

- Skopos(from Greek 'aim' or 'purpose')

- Introduced into translation theory in the 1970s by <u>Hans Vermeer</u>

- focuses on translation as an activity with an aim or purpose, and on the intended addressee or audience of the translation

- allows the possibility of the same text being translated in different ways according to the purpose of the TT and the commission which is given to the translator.

- The function of a translation is dependent on the knowledge, expectations, values and norms of the target readers

Czech and Slovak group of Translation Studies scholars: Levy

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Illusionary translations (are written as if they are originals, adapted to the target readership so they appear as literature from the target culture world itself)

Anti-illusionary translations (retain some features of the ST in order to inform the receiver that the document is a translation)

Czech and Slovak group of Translation Studies scholars: Popovič

"All that appears as new with respect to the original, or fails to appear where it might be expected have been interpreted as a **shift**".

A. Popovic distinguishes *4 types of equivalence*:

1) *linguistic equivalence*, where there is a homogeneity on the linguistic level of both SL and TL texts, i.e. word level;

2) *paradigmatic equivalence*, where there is equivalence of the elements of a paradigmatic expressive axis, i.e. elements of grammar (a higher category than lexical equivalence;

3) *stylistic equivalence*, where there is functional equivalence of elements in both original and translation aiming at expressive identity with an invariant of identical meaning;

4) *textual equivalence* (syntagmatic) where there is equivalence of the syntagmatic structuring of a text, i.e. equivalence of form and shape.

Descriptivists: James Holmes

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Holmes defines 4 types of translations belonging to different theoretical traditions:

1) *mimetic -* *retains the form of the original*

2) *analogous -* *discerns the function of the text in the receiving culture and seeks the parallel function* within the TL tradition, creating analogous forms with similar effect

3) *organic -* *content-derivative* taking the original meaning of the primary text and allowing it to develop into its own unique shape in the TL.

4) *deviant forms* not deriving from the original poem at all, but deliberately retaining minimal similarity for other purposes.

James Holmes` map
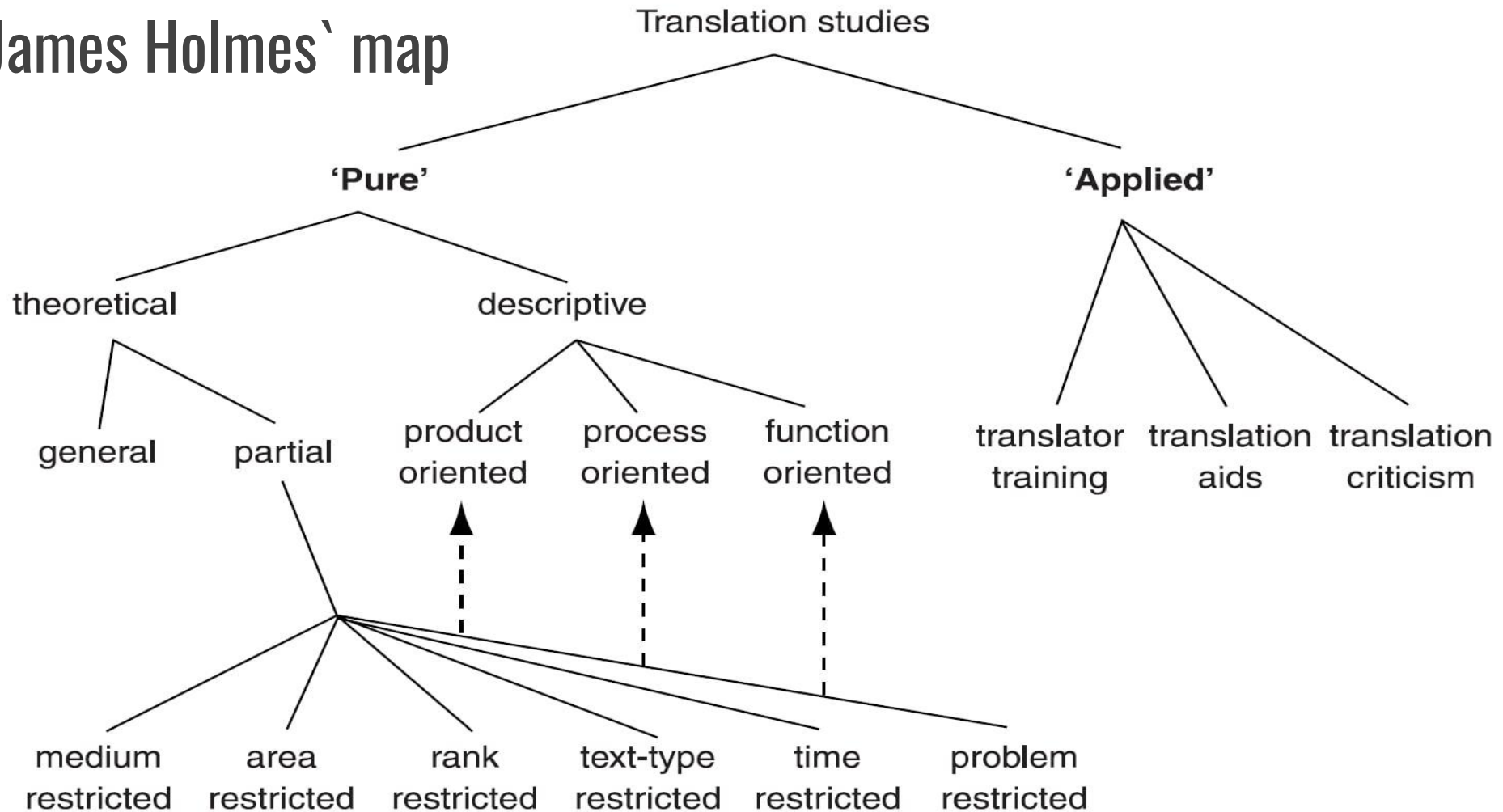
Descriptivists: Andre Lefever

7 different types of translation:

1) *phonemic translation*

2) *literal translation*

3) *metrical translation*

4) *prose translation*

5) *rhyming translation*

6) *blank translation*

7) *interpretation*

Polysystem theory: Itamar Even-Zohar

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3 social circumstances enabling the situation in which translation will maintain the primary position:

1) When a literature is young or in the process of being established;

2) when a literature is peripheral or weak or both;

3) when literature is experiencing the crisis or turning-point.
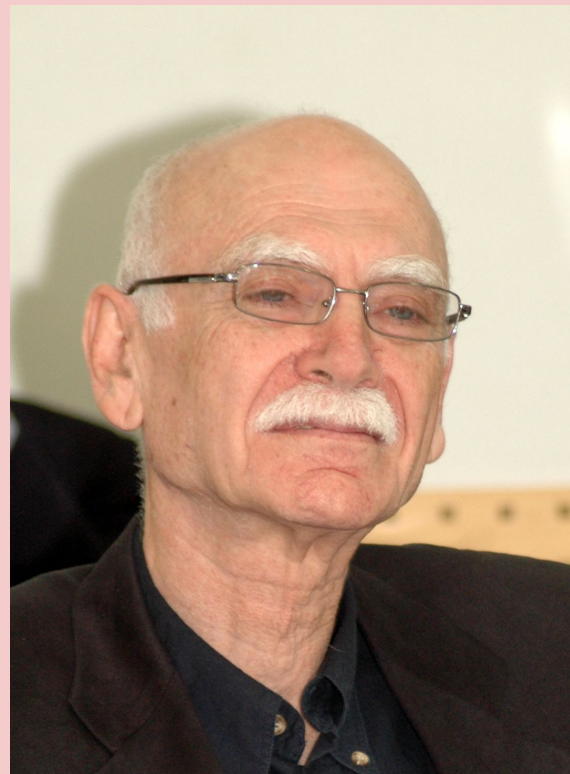
Quiz

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1. Component of "vortex" connected to visual property :
a) melopoeia
b) phanopoeia
c) logopoeia

2. What is interlingual translation?

a) translation between 2 different l-s
b) translation within 1 language
c) something connected to non-verbal translation

3) The idea of translations prolonging the life of the original was suggested by:

a) Roman Jacobson
b) Walter Benjamin
c) Eugene Nida

4) Who was not concerned with the idea of equivalence?

a) Susan Bassnet
b) Eugene Nida
c) Werner Koller

5.Find the odd shift:

a) unit shift
b) word shift
c) class shift

6. Find a scholar who didn't belong to Leipzig school:

a) Otto Kade

b) Katharina Reiss

c) Albrecht Neubert

7.The aim of translation for Katharina Reiss is:

a) to preserve the text types

b) to preserve the function of the text

c) to preserve the form of the text

8. Who has developed the theory of "illusionist" and the "anti-illusionist" translation:

a) Werner Koller

b) Jiří Levý

c) James Holmes

9. According to James Holmes` map Theory of translation is subdivided into:
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a) pure and applied branches
b) theoretical and descriptive
c) general and partial

10. Which statement is False:

Translation occupies primary position when:

a) literature is experiencing the crisis or turning-point
b) a literature is young or in the process of being established
c) literature is a strong systems with well-developed literary
   traditions

Thank you for your attention!